

# THE AUK:

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF

ORNITHOLOGY.

---

VOL. XXXIII.

APRIL, 1916.

No. 2.

---

## AUDUBONIANA.

BY JOHN E. THAYER.

*Plates III-VI.*

I HAD the good fortune recently to secure some very interesting Auduboniana, formerly the property of Dr. George Parkman of Boston. There are four original water-color paintings, representing the Butter-ball, Golden-eye and Merganser and the Golden-crowned Kinglet; also the original specimen of Parkman's Wren mounted on a twig, in a paper box with a glass front. The box is six and three quarters inches tall, four and a half inches wide and three inches deep, and the bird is in excellent condition. Two letters containing some references to the bird complete the collection.

The paintings are reproduced on the accompanying plates and the letters are printed in full below. The inscriptions on the paintings are as follows:

### PLATE III.

Henderson March 19, 1815

No 71 44 The Spirit or Butterball — Bufflehead

### PLATE IV.

Weight of female 1lb. 2/16

Length 16½ inches

Breadth  $27\frac{1}{2}$  inches  
 Tail feathers 16 inches  
 French name  
     Louisiana Gademe  
     Golden Eye

## PLATE V.

Longueur total 26 pouces  
 Pesa (?) 3 lb. 13 onze  
 Ano (?) gure 36 p<sup>ed</sup> (?)  
 J'Enleve avec beaucoup de Deficulté  
 de l'eau ou il naga très profond.—  
 Chute de L'Ohio 17 December 1809. J. A.  
 No. 144  
 64 Malaga Shell Drake. Goosander.  
 Mergus Merganser A. W.

## PLATE VI.

Golden Crested Wren A. W.

*Sylvia Regulus*

154 Shippingport, Kentucky

Jan'y 28, 1820.

drawn by J. J. Audubon

Mistletoe on Black Walnut

This last is the most beautiful of all the original Audubon drawings that I have.

Parkman's Wren was one of the species discovered by J. K. Townsend on the Columbia River and Audubon describes it in Vol. V of the 'Ornithological Biography' p. 310, among "Species found in North America but not figured in the 'Birds of America.'" He states that Townsend secured but a single specimen and adds at the end of his account

"Feeling perfectly confident that this species is distinct from any other, and not finding it anywhere described, I have named it after my most kind, generous, and highly talented friend, George Parkman, Esq. M. D. of Boston, as an indication of the esteem in

which I hold him, and of the gratitude which I ever cherish towards him."

The first letter was evidently written when Audubon was engrossed in his work on the quadrupeds and while he and his sons were issuing the octavo edition of the "Birds of America." In this the Parkman's Wren was figured and as the part containing it appeared in 1841 it is probable that it was one of those which Dr. Parkman distributed in Boston for Audubon. After the plate was drawn it is evident that the type specimen was mounted as a gift for Parkman. The two letters follow.

New York, June 20<sup>th</sup> 1841

My Dear Friend.—

I intended having written to you yesterday by Miss Shattuck, who was good enough to spend the day with us, but I was so deeply engaged on a drawing of Rocky Mountain Flying Squirrels, that the time for her departure came suddenly and I could merely ask of her to say to you, that your last letter and remittance had reached us in safety, and with the unexampled promptness shewn by you on the three occasions you have been troubled with the delivery of 46 parts of our work to 46 of our Boston subscribers; and for which as I have said before I am very sorry to have nought but our sincerest thanks and gratitude to you for this, so remarkable friendly proceeding. May our God reward you and yours for all your generous actions.

I thank you also for your memorandums about the quadrupeds in the Boston Museum as I see that our animal there may save me the trouble of going to the State of Maine for it. When I was last under the hospitable roof of our Friend Doc<sup>r</sup> Shattuck, I saw in George's room a N<sup>o</sup>. of the "Penny Magazine" in which there is a plate representing a family of Beavers at work, that reminded me greatly of what I have seen in the ponds of Indiana some thirty years ago, and which I should like to have for a few days to assist in part in the making of the background to my Drawing of these animals, drawn from the Individual you procured for me. I will take good care of the N<sup>o</sup>. and will return it safely very soon.

Should George Shattuck have forwarded that N<sup>o</sup>. to Mr. B. of Baltimore, pray ask him to write to the later to send it me as soon

as convenient. If per chance you could procure for me a live *Hare* in the *Summer dress* (It is pure white in winter) pray do so and do not mind the price or the cost of its conveyance to me. This animal is abundant in the northern portions of your State and is fully double the size of the common *Hare* called the "Rabbit"

With sincerest regards and kindest remembrances to all around you and our mutual Friends,

believe [me] yours always

John J. Audubon

The "Parkman Wren"  
well mounted will soon be  
on your chimney mantle!

New York, August 13th 1841.

My Dear Friend,—

By Mr. Legaré who revisits your City, I have the pleasure of sending to you, the "*Parkman's Wren*" and I hope you will receive it in good order. We found it necessary to recaste the position of this little fellow on account of the many shots that passed through its neck when killed.

I also send you the numbers of the little work wanted by General Lyman which please have delivered to him with my best regards. I should like you to receive the money for those numbers, so as not to cause confusion in our accounts with Messrs. Little & Brown. I had the pleasure of introducing Mr. Legaré last year and therefor you will remember that Gentleman.

With sincerest good wishes to all the Dear ones around you, believe me always

Your attached Friend and Servant,

John J. Audubon.